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Executive Registry

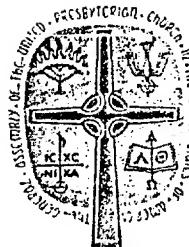
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## THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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William P. Thompson, Stated Clerk

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July 1, 1976

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Mr. George Bush  
Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Bush:

The 188th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, meeting in Baltimore, May 18-26, 1976, discussed at length the implications of the relations between governmental intelligence agencies and missionaries and clergy. This matter had been previously considered by our Program Agency, and by the Assembly's committee on Acceptance of an Interdependent World and Mission Within It. The Assembly adopted a "Statement on Central Intelligence Agency Contacts with American Missionaries and Foreign Clergy." As Stated Clerk I have been instructed to communicate this statement to you, expressing the concerns of our church in this matter. The full text is attached.

The church's concern was aroused with the revelations made in Congressional committees regarding the widespread activities of the C.I.A., and with the statements made by Philip W. Buchen, White House counsel, and the former C.I.A. Director, William E. Colby, regarding C.I.A. contacts with missionaries and clergy. This matter, with all of its ramifications, has deeply troubled the churches in our land and abroad. It is felt that such activity undermines the trust and confidence of others in the religious commitment of our mission personnel, and endangers our traditions of the separation of church and state. The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. shares this concern and therefore calls upon the government to cease the practice of information gathering from American missionaries and foreign clergy by any of its intelligence agencies. While it is recognized that it is impossible to eliminate all contact between church related individuals and the government, it is urgent that both parties eschew this particular type of relationship.

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We therefore urge you, as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, to act decisively in this matter and clarify the separations that are required within the respective agencies of the administration. We hope that public reassurance can be given that will remove the concerns of church people both here and abroad. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully yours,



William P. Thompson

WPT:  
Enclosure

STATEMENT ON CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY CONTACTS  
WITH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AND FOREIGN CLERGY

High United States Government sources have recently confirmed and defended extensive contacts between the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) and American missionaries and foreign clergy abroad. In letters released December 12, 1975 by Senator Mark Hatfield the following statements are made:

By Philip W. Buchen, President Ford's White House Counsel (November 5, 1975):

The President does not feel it would be wise at present to prohibit the C.I.A. from having any connection with the clergy....Clergymen throughout the world are often valuable sources of intelligence and many clergymen, motivated solely by patriotism, voluntarily and willingly aid the government in providing information of intelligence value.

By William E. Colby, Director of the C.I.A. (September 23, 1975):

In many countries of the world representatives of clergy, foreign and local, play a significant role and can be of assistance to the United States through the C.I.A. with no reflection upon their integrity or their mission.

The 188th General Assembly (1976) of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. believes such C.I.A. and other U.S. Government agency intelligence gathering from American missionaries and foreign clergy should stop immediately because:

Trust and confidence are central to any mission relationship. Church bodies overseas have the right to expect that the relationships of United States religious personnel to those churches will be solely at the service of a common Christian mission and will not be used in any way for intelligence gathering purposes of any government.

Therefore, the 188th General Assembly (1976) of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Supports the current efforts of members of Congress to enact legislation which will prohibit the C.I.A. and other U.S. Government intelligence agencies from seeking intelligence information from American missionaries and clergy, and from appropriation of funds for such purposes. Specifically, the Executive Committee supports such measures as Senate Bill 2784 introduced on December 15, 1975 by Senator Mark Hatfield.

Affirms its conviction that it is inconsistent with the understanding of missionary responsibility to the church under which he/she serves, and of the relationship in mission between the United Presbyterian Church colleague churches, that any United Presbyterian-related personnel should engage in intelligence gathering activities of the Government of the United States or of any other nation.

The General Assembly further instructs its Stated Clerk to communicate this Statement to the President of the United States, to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, to all members of Congress, to the press, and to all staff and related "people in mission" of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., so that in both public and church forums action may be taken immediately to repudiate and terminate any further intelligence gathering contacts between the Central Intelligence Agency and American missionaries or foreign clergy.